

# **X-block Guidelines/Needham High School**

*A Caring Community Striving for Personal Growth  
and Academic Excellence*

## **Purpose of X-block:**

The educators at Needham High School recognize that students learn in different ways and at different paces, with some needing additional support at particular times in their learning. The educators at NHS also recognize that not all students have the same accessibility to meet with teachers or counselors for additional support after school, which is traditionally a primary time for such assistance.

The Needham High School X-block is designed

1. to provide all NHS students with time within the school schedule to work on academic and/or social emotional growth; and
2. to provide academic and social emotional support for all students struggling\* in school.

\*A **struggling student** is one who is underperforming in classes; working excessively hard to maintain satisfactory grades; and/or whose social emotional state is interfering with academic progress.

The X-block provides students with equitable access to any of their teachers and counselors during the school day. It will not completely eliminate the need for before or after school help with a teacher, especially in specialized settings or with specialized equipment.

## **Uses of X-block:**

Students may use the X-block for:

- Individualized extra help or skill development;
- Social emotional support (counselors, any educator);
- Collaborative projects with peers;
- Homework or assignment completion;
- Other relevant activities as approved by the X-block committee.

Needham High School may use the X Block for:

- Community and relationship building;
- Class meetings and events;
- Student Council activities;
- Other similar events and activities

## **X-block Schedule and Structure:**

X-block will meet three times a week during the school day. Each meeting will be for 30 minutes on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, allowing students to see one teacher during the time frame. Students will report to homeroom if they are not visiting a teacher, or they will report directly to the teacher they are visiting.

## **Scheduling Visits:**

Students will schedule to visit a teacher/counselor, or a teacher/counselor will request to see a student. Ultimately, the teacher/counselor must give permission to visit during the X-block to ensure space is available for the visiting students. Homeroom teachers may direct students to visit teachers in classes in which they are struggling. Students and teachers will use the online program to schedule and track appointments and manage attendance.

## **Scheduling Process:**

- Teachers/counselors can pre-schedule to meet with a student.
- Students can speak to teachers/counselors to request a meeting.
- Homeroom teachers can suggest teachers/counselors for a student to meet.
- Meetings between teachers/counselors and students who are struggling will take priority.
- Teachers will individually establish the number of students they can appropriately support during each X-block.

## **X-block Expectations for Students**

- All students, including those with junior and senior privileges, will be required to attend and use X-block.
- Students will be productive and engaged during each X-block.
- Students will be either in their homeroom working individually or with a teacher/counselor getting additional help or in the cafeteria working collaboratively with classmates.
- Attendance will be taken and monitored; appropriate disciplinary consequences will be given to students not in attendance.
- Students will abide by the Responsible Use Policy while using technology.
- Students who would like to work collaboratively with peers can sign up for the cafeteria, which will be overseen by building administrators.
- All school rules apply during X-block.

## **Student Engagement during X-block includes:**

- Clarifying assignments given by a teacher.
- Understanding concepts that have been presented in class.
- Comprehending assigned reading material.

- Practicing fundamental skills necessary for a class.
- Practicing fundamental skills necessary for social emotional growth.
- Developing research formats for projects.
- Working individually on major projects or class assignments.
- Collaborating with classmates on class projects.
- Receiving assistance with incomplete class assignments.
- Completing tests, quizzes or other assessments.
- Conferring with a teacher/counselor to advance studies.
- Meeting with a counselor for social emotional support and growth.

### **X-block Expectations for NHS Staff**

In order to provide a systematic opportunity for students to access interventions and supports during X-block, all educators will:

- Use available technology to take attendance, communicate with students, and set up meetings;
- Schedule students in a fair and equitable way that prioritizes struggling students (A struggling student is one who is underperforming in classes; working excessively hard to maintain satisfactory grades; and/or whose social emotional state is interfering with academic progress);
- Prioritize students' needs when making appointments, which may mean coordinating with colleagues to help students prioritize their needs.

Administrators will monitor collaborative spaces.

### **X-Block Coordination**

Members of the NHS administrative team will meet with members of the Unit A leadership team twice a year. The group will consist of one NEA member and one administrator serving as co-chairs, along with two additional NEA members appointed by the NEA and two additional administrators. The group will meet to:

- Discuss proposed uses for the X-block time;
- Evaluate the guidelines and logistics for X-block;
- Identify those metrics that will be monitored (such as MCAS, year end grades, attendance);
- Assess the effectiveness of X-block, by monitoring the identified metrics, particularly with struggling students and those in historically marginalized groups;
- Identify all possible school and class activities that could move into the X Block period/s to minimize the impact on the loss of curriculum time and balance the impact across grade levels;
- Assess the scheduling program on a regular basis to ensure it continues to meet the needs of staff and students.